



NEWS RELEASE

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JULY 28, 2009

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WYOMING MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO FAKE DIPLOMATIC IDENTIFICATION

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Matt J. Whitworth, Acting United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a Cheyenne, Wyo., man with connections to the sovereign citizen movement pleaded guilty in federal court today to buying fraudulent diplomatic credentials.

Blake W. Bestol, 47, of Cheyenne, Wyo., pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Dean Whipple this afternoon to the charge contained in an Aug. 6, 2008, federal indictment.

Between Aug. 13 and Dec. 21, 2006, **Bestol** obtained an identification card that purported to be diplomatic identification and carried the title of “Ambassador” next to his name. **Bestol** admitted that the seal of the U.S. Department of State printed on the card made it appear that the diplomatic identification card had been issued by, or with the authority of, the government.

Bestol also admitted that he purchased the fraudulent identification to attempt to claim that he had some type of diplomatic immunity as a result of having such a card. He knew, however, that he was not, and never had been, a diplomat recognized by the Dept. of State, and had never been employed by the Dept. of State in any capacity.

Under federal statutes, **Bestol** is subject to a sentence of up to five years in federal prison without parole, plus a fine up to \$250,000. A sentencing hearing will be scheduled after the completion of a presentence investigation by the United States Probation Office.

This case is being prosecuted by Special Assistant U.S. Attorney M. Alexander Menzel, Jr., and Assistant U.S. Attorneys Daniel J. Stewart and Brian Casey. It was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow/index.html